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ACTION EUR-25

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

USNMR SHAPE

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SUBJ: MBFR:AD HOC GROUP CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO MARCH 15 NAC

VIENNA FOR USDEL MBFR

REF: VIENNA 2262

SUMMARY: BEHREND'S (FRG), QUARLES (NETHERLANDS) AND VARNØ (NORWAY) PROVIDED AD HOC GROUP BRIEFING TO NAC ON MBFR DEVELOPMENTS IN VIENNA SINCE FEB 15. MENZIES (CANADA) AND DE STAERCCKE (BELGIUM) BOTH WELCOMED BEHREND'S STATEMENT THAT AHG WOULD PROVIDE NAC EARLY ASSESSMENT OF GENERAL NEGOTIATING SITUATION. MENZIES BELIEVED PRESENT ALLIED STANCE CORRECT, BUT STRESSED NAC NEED FOR AHG JUDGMENT ON WHEN ALLIES NEED INTRODUCE NEW ELEMENTS INTO NEGOTIATING POSITION. END SUMMARY

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1. BEHREND'S PREPARED STATEMENT GENERALLY FOLLOWED OUTLINE IN REFTEL. RE PARA 5 OF REFTEL, HE ADDED THAT KHLESTOV HINTED AT MAR 7 PLENARY HE MIGHT RAISE POINT OF ORDER IF WEST AGAIN RAISED ANY OF ITS PROPOSED STABILIZING MEASURES OTHER THAN

PRE-ANNOUNCEMENT OF U.S. AND SOVIET TROOP MOVEMENTS INTO AREA OF REDUCTIONS. HOWEVER, BEHREND'S BELIEVES, BASED ON INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS, THAT SOVIETS ARE AWARE THAT DOING THIS WOULD CREATE VERY SERIOUS SITUATION: SOVIETS WILL PROBABLY CONSIDER THE THREE OTHER WESTERN STABILIZING MEASURES NON-NEGOTIABLE, BUT WILL NOT DISRUPT SESSIONS BECAUSE OF THEM. BEHREND'S AT SEVERAL POINTS NOTED THAT WHAT ALLIED REPS SAY AT PLENARY AND INFORMAL SESSIONS COORDINATED VERY CLOSELY BY AHG.

2. PANSA (ACTING SYG) HAD IMPRESSION FROM BEHREND'S STATEMENT THAT MBFR NEGOTIATIONS HAVE MOVED INTO MORE SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION IN RECENT WEEKS, AND THAT RUSSIANS, WHILE STICKING TO THEIR GUNS, WERE COMING UP WITH MORE PROPOSALS THAN PREVIOUSLY. BEHREND'S REPLIED THAT HE WOULDN'T SAY THE NEGOTIATIONS HAD MOVED INTO MORE SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS. ALLIES DO NOT DEVIATE FROM NAC DOCTRINE, AND WP, DESPITE SOME FLEXIBILITY IN INFORMAL SESSIONS, TENDS TO STICK TO USUAL ARGUMENTATION USED IN PLENARY SESSIONS.

3. MENZIES (CANADA), WHO VISITED VIENNA LAST WEEK, WAS FAVORABLY IMPRESSED BY AHG COHESION AND ITS STEADFASTNESS RE NAC DOCTRINE. HE THOUGHT IT ESSENTIAL TO CONTINUE TO HAMMER ON NEED FOR COMMON CEILING AND EFFECTIVE BALANCE. PRESENT ALLIED STANCE IS CORRECT. HOWEVER, HE WONDERED HOW LONG INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE WOULD PERMIT CONTINUING IN CAUTIOUS WAY. HE CITED SEVERAL FACTORS AFFECTING CLIMATE: BREZHNEV HAS MADE STATEMENT ENVISAGING START OF REDUCTIONS IN 1975, U.S. CONGRESSIONAL PRESSURES FOR TROOP CUTS MAY BE RENEWED WHEN DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL COMES UP THIS SUMMER: PRESIDENT NIXON WILL VISIT SOVIET UNION. IN ADDITION CONCLUSION OF PHASE 2 OF CSCE MAY CAUSE PUBLIC OPINION TO EXPECT SOME MOVEMENT IN MBFR. MENZIES WAS GLAD TO HEAR THAT THE AHG WILL PROVIDE THE NAC AN ASSESSMENT OF NEGOTIATING SITUATION PRIOR TO EASTER RECESS. NAC SHOULD KNOW THAN AHG JUDGMENT ON WHEN WE NEED TO INTRODUCE NEW ELEMENTS INTO NEGOTIATING POSITION. HE CAUTIONED AGAINST AHG EXHAUSTING PRESENT INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE ASKING FOR NEW ONES, BECAUSE IT WILL TAKE SIX WEEKS OR MORE TO DEVELOP NEW POSITIONS.

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3. QUARLES, IN RESPONSE TO MENZIES INTERVENTION, SAID ALLIANCE MUST CONCENTRATE ON WHAT MEANS ALLIES HAVE TO GET WP AGREEMENT ON A PHASE I WITH U.S.-SOVIET TROOPS CUTS, AND COMMITMENT TO A COMMON CEILING. THIS IS ESSENTIAL AND ALLIES ARE ON STRONG GROUND. STRULAK ASKED HIM A FEW DAYS AGO HOW SERIOUSLY WE TOOK THIS OBJECTIVE AND WAS DISMAYED AT HIS REPLY. HOWEVER, QUARLES OBSERVED, TO GET SOMETHING WE MUST GIVE SOMETHING. RE NEAR TERM AHG NEEDS, HE THOUGHT ALLIES SHOULD BE ABLE TO INDICATE WILLINGNESS NOT TO INCREASE FORCE LEVELS FOR A CERTAIN PERIOD AS PART OF A FIRST AGREEMENT WHICH WOULD INCLUDE PRINCIPLE OF COMMON CEILING. WHILE RECOGNIZING SPC DEALING WITH HIS, IT SHOULD PURSUE WORK VIGOROUSLY. HE THOUGHT ALLIES SHOULD BE ABLE SAY SOMETHING MORE ABOUT TIMING, AND STUDIES

UNDERWAY HERE ON THIS ALSO. HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO HAVE INSTRUCTIONS ENABLING AD HOC GROOUP TO INDICATE WHICH ALLIED DIRECT PARTICIPANTS OTHER THAN US WOULD BE PREPARED TO PARTICIPATE IN PHASE II CUTS AS PART OF A PHASE I COMMON CEILING AGREEMENT. AHG WOULD ALSO FIND IT USEFUL HAVE DATA ON AIR FORCE MANPOWER AT EARLY DATE.

4. DE STAERCKE (BELGIUM), LIKE MENZIES, WELCOMED THE EARLY ASSESSMENT OF THE GENERAL NEGOTIATING SITUATION WHICH THE AHG WILL PROVIDE THE NAC. HE WAS PERPLEXED BY MANY VARIATIONS ON SAME THEME CURRENTLY BEING PUT FORWARD BY SOVIETS. HE PARTICULARLY WONDERED WHAT THE WP PROPOSAL FOR SYMBOLIC REDUCTIONS MEANT. HE STRESSED THAT PUBLIC OPINION WAS FUNDAMENTAL TO MBFR AND ASKED IF AHG COULD PREPARE PRESS STATEMENT BEFORE EASTER RECESS.

5. BEHREND S SAID THE AHG IS PLANNING PRESS CONFERENCE FOR WEDNESDAY BEFORE EASTER. HE DESCRIBED SYMBOLIC REDUCTION PROPOSAL ALONG LINES OF PREVIOUS VIENNA REPORTING. HE NOTED THAT INITIAL SYMBOLIC REDUCTIONS, IF APPLIED TO EVERYONE COULD ESTABLISH PRINCIPLE THAT PRESENT RELATION OF FORCES WOULD BE MAINTAINED IN LATER REDUCTIONS. ONCE WEST AGREED TO SPECIFIC EQUAL PERCENTAGE REDUCTIONS IT WOULD BE HARD TO MOVE TO ANOTHER SYSTEM. ALSO A SECOND PHASE WOULD REQUIRE EVEN MORE ASYMMETRICAL CUTS THAN OUR PROPOSED TO ATTAIN A COMMON CEILING. HOWEVER, WP COUNTRIES WERE EVASIVE WHEN ASKED IF THEY COULD AGREE TO COMMON CEILING AS PART OF SUCH AN APPROACH.

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6. ADMIRAL MINTER (DEPUTY CHAIRMAN) SAID HE HOPED TO HAVE AIR FORCE MANPOWER DATA BY END OF APRIL. HE WONDERED WHEN AHG ANTICIPATED GENERAL DISCUSSION OF ALLIED DATA BASE. BEHREND S APPRECIATED THIS ESTIMATE ON AVAILABILITY OF AIR FORCE DATA. HE OBSERVED AIR FORCE DATA IMPORTANT NOT ONLY AS A BASIS FOR LATER DISCUSSIONS, BUT ALSO (IF IT IS TRUE THAT AIR FORCE MANPOWER IN NATO AND WP ABOUT EQUAL) TO SUPPORT ALLIED ARGUMENT THAT GROUND FORCES REMAIN THE ESSENTIAL FOCUS OF THIS NEGOTIATION. RE GENERAL DISCUSSION OF ALLIED DATA BASE, HE SAID EAST WANTS TO MOVE TO THAT STAGE AFTER BASIC AGREEMENT REACHED.

7. HARTOGH (NETHERLANDS) ASKED WHETHER THERE WOULD BE ADDITIONAL INFORMAL SESSIONS BEYOND THE SEVEN PRESENTLY SCHEDULED. QUARLES SAID THIS IS A DELICATE POINT, WHICH AHG WILL CONSIDER AFTER EVALUATION OF EXPERIENCE WITH THE SEVEN INFORMAL SESSIONS ALREADY AGREED TO. SPEAKING PERSONALLY, HE SAW NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO CONTINUE THE INFORMAL SESSIONS AS PRESENTLY ORGANIZED. TO WIDEN THE INFORMAL SESSIONS TO INCLUDE ALL DIRECT PARTICIPANTS WOULD CAUSE CLEAR SEPARATION BETWEEN DIRECT AND INDIRECT PARTICIPANTS.

8. PANS A CLOSED THE DISCUSSION BY STATING THAT NEXT AHG BRIEFING OF NAC IS SCHEDULED FOR APRIL 5, HOPEFULLY INCLUDING ASSESSMENT

OF NEGOTIATING SITUATION, THAT AHG PRESS CONFERENCE BEFORE
EASTER SHOULD PROVIDE GOOD MATERIAL FOR PUBLIC OPINION, AND THAT
AHG SHOULD LET NAC KNOW WHAT IT NEEDS BY WAY OF NEW INSTRUCTIONS
IN SUFFICIENT TIME. RUMSFELD

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